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had established stations and schools not only at Diarbekr, but also at Mardin, Kharpüt, Bidlis, and Orfa, with branch stations, under the superintendence of native Protestants, at the intermediate towns and villages. In their teaching they never failed to inculcate the obligations of the subject towards his sovereign; and in this manner they have infused a spirit of loyalty among their followers, for the Sultan, superior even to that entertained by his Moslem subjects. The value of such teaching to Turkey, when contrasted with that of the Roman Propagandists, must be apparent. They began their labours about fourteen years ago, at Diarbekr, the capital of Kurdistan. At that time it was hardly possible for them to walk in the streets without being hooted and abused by men and boys. However they persevered: they did not give up their work as the agents of other religious Societies had done, and they had been rewarded. When they began their work there was not a single Protestant in Diarbekr; last year they had a congregation of 500 families. Out of their own small means—perfectly incommensurate with the great work they had in hand—they had founded two churches, and defrayed the whole of the expenses, including the salaries of the native pastors and teachers. They will not hastily receive any person that offers himself into their churches, but require a probation; they educate candidates in their schools, examine them, and after they have found them competent they receive them into their Church. In this work they had been supported to the extent of some two or three thousand pounds only, a great part of which had been made up by the voluntary contributions of the native congregations. As their funds were mostly raised in America, their means are at present, owing to the civil war, much curtailed, and they have been compelled in consequence to close some of their useful establishments. If any support could be given to these people, it would be well for us and well for Turkey. The only way to regenerate Turkey was by extended education, and certainly no other people than the Americans had found out the way to this desired end.

In answer to questions put by Mr. JOHN CRAWFORD, Mr. TAYLOR said that the Christians in Kurdistan were divided into Jacobites, Armenians, and Nestorians, who were again subdivided into Syrian, Armenian, and Chaldean Catholics, and that very few Mahomedans had been converted to Christianity; three or four, not more.

The second Paper was the following:—

2. *On Lake Nor Tsai-san and its Neighbourhood.* By M. A. ABRAMOF, Fellow of the Imperial Geographical Society of Russia.

LAKE NOR TSAI-SAN is situated in the province of Gobdi, of the Chinese Empire. Its south-western borders very closely approximate to the Siberian frontier, and it spreads itself out in a broad and elevated valley, surrounded by mountain ranges on three of its sides. It was formerly called, by the Mongols, Kun-blotu-Nor, or "The Lake of Bells," on account of its waves producing, when striking against some parts of its reed-grown shore, a sound which resembled from a distance the tinkling of bells. The present name of Nor Tsai-san has been given it by the Kalmyks since 1650, when, during a period of famine, they supported themselves by the fish caught in the lake, and in grateful remembrance called it Tsai-

san, which in the Kalmyk language signifies "noble" or "honourable." The length of Nor Tsai-san is about 90 miles, its breadth being from 15 to 30; soundings gave a depth in some parts of 40 feet. In former years it was of greater extent and depth; and that such was the case is proved by the existence of sand-hillocks at a considerable distance from its present shore, and by the low marshy land in the neighbourhood being overgrown with weeds to a considerable extent. The waters are transparent, fresh, soft, and good for cooking purposes, but of a reddish colour in the deep pools and indentations. The lake becomes covered with ice at the end of October, and clear again about the same time in April. The Upper, or Black, Irtysh falls into the lake from the east, a river which, in the dry season (September) becomes so shallow, that boats of light burthen pass with great difficulty. It is called "black" on account of its waters being pure, and hence having a dark appearance. The Lower, or White Irtysh, which flows out of the lake on its northern course past Tobolsk to the Arctic Sea, owes its distinctive name to the turbidity of its waters. The sturgeon (*Accipenser sturio*), and the sterled (*Accipenser ruthenus*), and the Nelma salmon (*Salmo nelma*), are abundant in the lake; and the Russians have established a fishing-station upon it, the fishery being carried on by Cossack soldiers for the benefit of their corps. The Chinese do not interfere with the fishing operations in their territory further than by sending an "Anban," or Governor, annually for two or three days in the month of June, to visit the Russian pickets and receive a peace-offering, which is usually 500 salted sterleds.

The PRESIDENT stated that this paper (communicated to the Society by its author, a resident of Berezov in Siberia) had been translated from the Russian for publication in the Society's Journal. It was the most graphic description we have yet had of any of the numerous great lakes that lie along the frontier between Russia and Tartary. The lake had been to a certain extent described by our own countryman, Mr. Atkinson, in his interesting work 'Oriental and Western Siberia.' But Mr. Atkinson, with all his talents for description, and all his powers as a painter, never made physical observations, or determined a latitude or longitude; and, what was much to be regretted, never kept a diary of the times he visited these places. The present paper, therefore, was a considerable addition to our knowledge of a country of which we at present know so little.

The meeting then adjourned.

Fifth Meeting, January 23rd, 1865.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

ELECTIONS.—*Frederick Achison, Esq.*, C.E.; *Dr. F. H. Blaxall, R.N.*; *J. R. Brown, Esq.*; *E. Butler, Esq.*; *Capel Cure, Esq.*; *John E. Cowan, Esq.*; *E. A. Drummond, Esq.*; *H. R. Grenfell, Esq.*, M.P.; *W. R. Grey, Esq.*; *Robert Honeywood, Esq.*; *Henry B. Owen, Esq.*, F.R.S.L.; *William F. Theed, Esq.*; *Rev. J. W. Todd*; *Augustus H. Tulk, Esq.*; *Thomas Vile, Esq.*; *Henry C. Walton, Esq.*, C.E.

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY since the last Meeting, January 9th, 1865.—‘Vegetation of Chatham Islands,’ sketched by F. Mueller, Esq., PH.D., &c. &c. ‘A Treatise on the Construction of Maps, with Rules for the Formation of Map Projections,’ by W. Hughes, Esq., F.R.G.S. ‘The Bibliographer’s Manual of English Literature,’ by H. Bohn, Esq.: all presented by their respective authors. ‘Tableaux de Population, de Culture, de Commerce, et de Navigation, pour l’Année 1862:’ presented by the French Ambassador. ‘Historia Física y Política de Chile,’ por Claudio Gay. ‘Historia, Zoologia, Botanica,’ &c. (plates; 23 vols. 8vo., and 3 vols. 4to.): presented by C. R. Markham, Esq., F.S.A., &c. &c. Continuations of ‘Journals,’ ‘Transactions,’ &c. &c.

ACCESSIONS TO THE MAP-ROOM.—America: Carte de Yucatan; Essai d’une Carte Ethnographique du Mexique. Asia: Carte du Japon; Carte des Regions Semiretschinsk et Transilienne dans l’Asie Centrale: presented by the author, M. V. A. Malte Brun. Two Pen-and-ink Sketches, by an Australian native. Index to the Ordnance Survey of Berwickshire. Map of the Peninsula of India, by Lieutenant-Colonel F. H. Scott: presented by the India Office, through J. Walker, Esq. Admiralty Charts to date, &c.

The following was the Paper of the evening—

On the Exploration of the North Polar Region. By Captain SHERARD OSBORN, R.N., C.B.

ARCTIC discovery, however imperfectly treated, must always, I feel sure, claim the attention of all true lovers of geography and physical science, especially that of a Society which, in its present prosperity, represents the deep interest recently exhibited by all grades of the public in the solution of the problem of a communication between the Pacific and Atlantic, and of the world-wide